

Arts and Culture

Waitakere has long had a reputation as an artists' hideaway and there are indeed many internationally known artists living here. But there is also a much more public, and more diverse, artistic heritage alive in the City.

The City's "top teams" and nationally recognised events give a picture of this diversity:

- Waitakere Brass Band
- Te Roopu Manutaki Kapa Haka group
- Going West literary festival
- The bands Te Vaka, Tadpole and Blindspot
- Pacifika Living Arts group
- Lopdell House Gallery
- Trash to Fashion event

Waitakere is also increasingly a centre for film and video production. There are two major indoor studios, and a long list of films and television series in which Waitakere's outstanding scenery has a starring role.



Glen Eden walkway

Waitakere City has a unique artistic heritage, reflecting the many distinct communities here. This is reflected in the City's public artworks, which are chosen to build on this uniqueness. The Council, as one of the major investors in public artworks, tries to facilitate art that is part of the

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structures and facilities of the area, not just an add-on. The Portage Licensing Trust is another major investor in public art in the City.

Employment in the arts and cultural sector is growing rapidly. But while the number of practicing artists is quite high the support networks of publishers, galleries, suppliers and technicians are often located outside of Waitakere City. There are already signs that the cultural sector is growing to a critical mass where it can sustain more full time employment. Meanwhile the arts and cultural community already contributes a lot to making Waitakere a unique and vibrant city to live in.

This chapter highlights the following key issues:

1. **CULTURE**
2. **EMPLOYMENT IN THE ARTS**
3. **ARTS AND CULTURAL GROUPS**
4. **EVENTS**
5. **FACILITIES**

KEY INDICATOR

The number of residents in Waitakere City employed in arts and culture is 804 in 2001 (significant increase from 426 in 1996).

1. CULTURE

The Tangata Whenua of Waitakere are Te Kawerau a Maki and Ngati Whatua iwi. In the 1830's, Europeans arrived in the area to mill timber, dig for Kauri gum and mill flax. Some settled permanently, establishing orchards and vineyards, brickworks and later, a range of urban industries.

The establishment of the railway line and the motorway linked Waitakere to urban Auckland and encouraged a new wave of migrants, mainly European but also Maori from rural areas. Immigrants from the Pacific Islands nations first established here in significant numbers in the 1960's, while the 1990's saw an influx of people from Asian nations.

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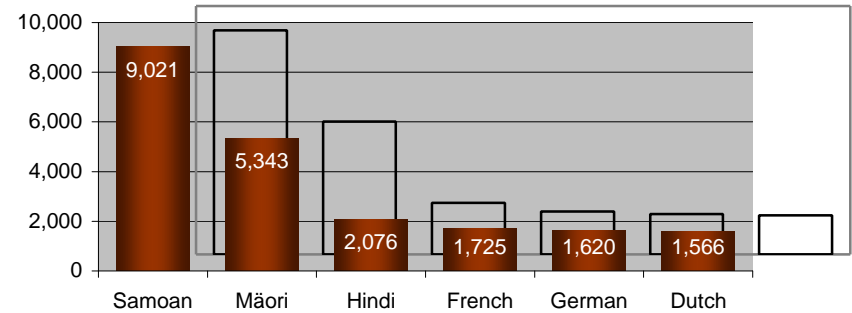
The Waitakere "melting pot" is now a complex mix of cultures. The languages spoken in the City give some clues to the cultures that are alive here.

Twenty two percent of Waitakere City's residents can speak more than one language. 18.3% (29,121) of people in Waitakere City speak two languages and 3.6% (5,664) speak three or more languages! Languages commonly spoken include Samoan, Maori, Hindi, French, German and Dutch (2001 Census),

The ability of these diverse cultures to contribute to the life and culture of the City does depend on people accepting and enjoying the fact that they are different. In comparison with other cities, Waitakere residents are less likely to be positive about increasing diversity and more likely to feel it makes no difference. While almost half (49%) of Waitakere residents believe that an increasing number of different people makes Waitakere a better/much better place to live, some 39% say it makes no difference. The number of people who say increasing diversity makes Waitakere a worse place to live is relatively low, at 7%. (*Telephone survey of a sample of residents in May 2000*).

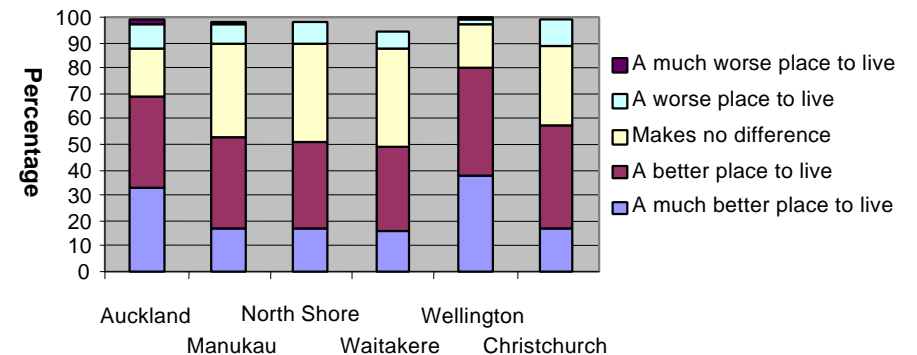
Updates as at 1 September 2002
 Updates @ www.waitakere.govt.nz

Top six languages spoken in Waitakere City other than English (2001)



Source: 2001 Census, Statistics New Zealand.

Perceptions of diversity in city (%)



Source: Residents surveys 2000 - Quality of Life in New Zealand's six largest cities report.

2. EMPLOYMENT IN THE ARTS

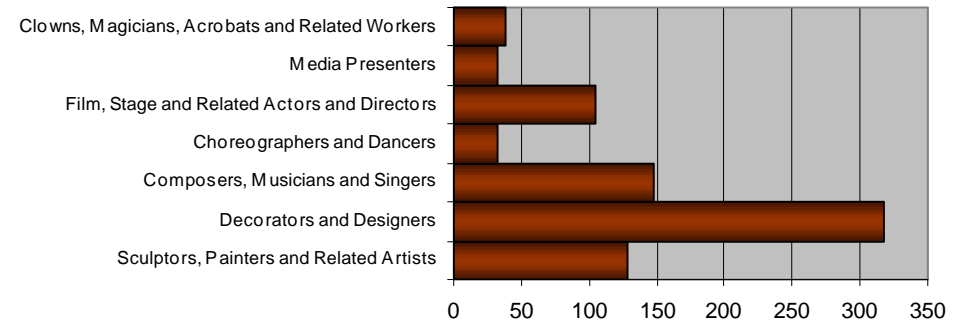
The arts are a significant component of the national economy. Depending on how broadly the artistic and cultural sectors are defined they make up from 2.2% to 4.3% of the national economy and account for 3.8% of jobs. Job growth in the arts is stronger than in the economy as a whole, and has a positive effect on tourism, another economic growth area. (*The Heart of the Nation, report to the Prime Minister, June 2000*)

The number of people in Waitakere whose main paid occupation was in the arts has grown significantly over the past five years from 426 in 1996 to 804 in 2001; this is an increase of about 18% per year.

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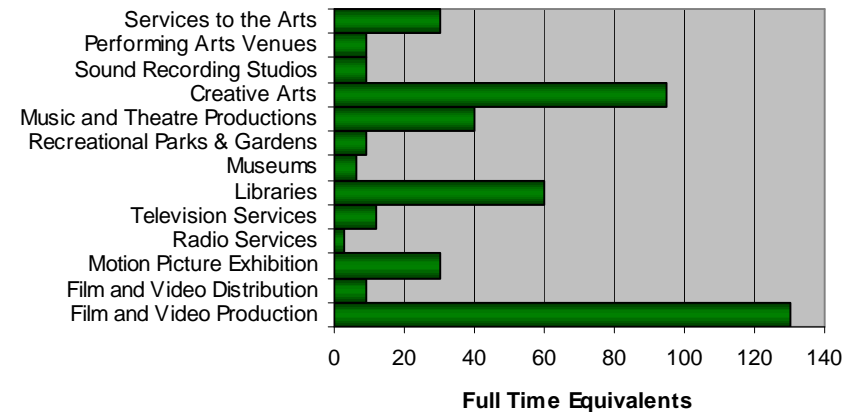
As shown by the following categories, people employed in the arts goes well beyond the artists themselves. Out of the 804 residents that are employed in the Arts sector, 129 are employed as sculptors, painters and related artists. Similarly, out of the 442 ‘Arts and Cultural’ employees in GST registered businesses located in Waitakere City, 95 are employed in the creative arts.

Artists in Arts Occupations in Waitakere 2001



Source: Statistics NZ 2001 Census

Employment in Arts and Culture Waitakere City 2001

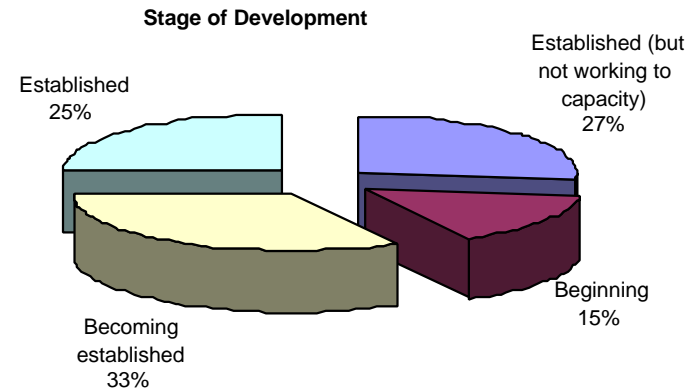


Source: Statistics NZ 2001 Business Demographics

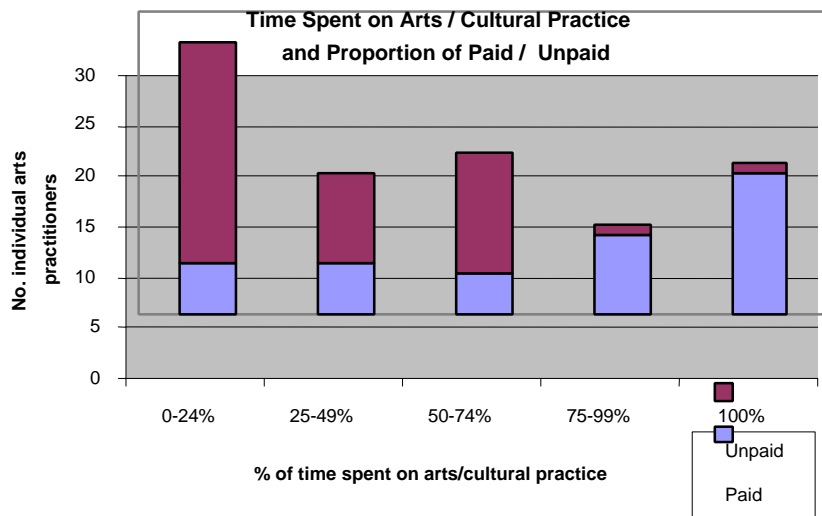
There is also a very significant unpaid artistic community in Waitakere City. Based on a survey of 116 artists, only around 25% of artists in the City are paid practitioners spending half their working hours or more on their arts/cultural practice. (Regionally Significant Arts and Culture Needs in Waitakere City, report prepared for Waitakere City Council, July 2000).

“ There is also a very significant unpaid artistic community in Waitakere City.”

Half of these individuals said they were established artists:



Source: Regionally Significant Arts and Culture Needs in Waitakere City, report to Waitakere City Council July 2000



Source: Regionally Significant Arts and Culture Needs in Waitakere City, report to Waitakere City Council July 2000

Other aspects of Waitakere’s artistic and cultural heritage need to be nurtured and built on before they can provide a living for those engaged in them. Not all of the City’s unpaid artists necessarily want to be paid, but if a larger number of people are able to make a living in the arts this will benefit the arts community as a whole.

There are opportunities to grow the City’s arts and cultural sector, including a new funding source (the Regional Arts and Cultural Fund), the likely establishment of a tertiary institute, and the development of the Waitakere Arts and Culture Development Trust centred on the Corban Estate in Henderson.

3. ARTS AND CULTURAL GROUPS

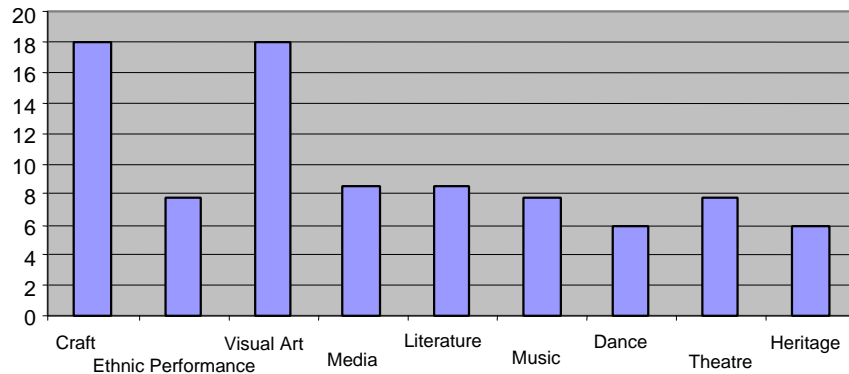
A large number of arts and cultural groups exist in Waitakere City. A survey of 90 arts groups with a total reported membership of 3,024 demonstrated the broad range of arts and cultural activities groups are involved in. The visual arts (20% of groups) and crafts (also 20%) accounted for the highest proportion of groups. Between them, the 90 groups had 281 staff of which 90% were volunteers. *(Regionally Significant Arts and Culture Needs in Waitakere City, report prepared for Waitakere City Council, July 2000).*

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Waitakere also has four “umbrella” groups who have a wider role in promoting the arts in the City. These are the Titirangi Community Arts Council, Waitakere Central Community Arts Council, the Waitakere Arts and Cultural Development Trust (charged with arts and cultural developments at the Corban Estate) and the West Auckland Sculpture Trust, an independent trust that invests in civic artworks with a grant from the Portage Licensing Trust.

There are also more specific trusts formed around particular projects, including the McCahon House Trust, an independent trust set up to develop the former Titirangi residence of artist Colin McCahon as an international arts residency.

Broad focus of groups



Source: *Regionally Significant Arts and Culture Needs in Waitakere City, report prepared for Waitakere City Council, July 2000*



4. EVENTS

The number of arts initiatives, programmes and events in Waitakere appears to be rising; 66 events were noted in the magazine “Artnews” in 1999 and 117 in the 2000 calendar year.

The Council supports a range of events, including:

- Pacifika Living Arts Festival
- Kite day
- Going West Literary Festival
- Christmas Gift-making
- Trash to Fashion

Attendance at these citywide festivals and events was 9,136 in 1998/99, 18,400 in 2000, and 17,400 in 2000/01.

5. FACILITIES

The map on the following page shows the range of facilities in Waitakere City, including schools, marae and churches as well as the Council's community centres, houses and halls.

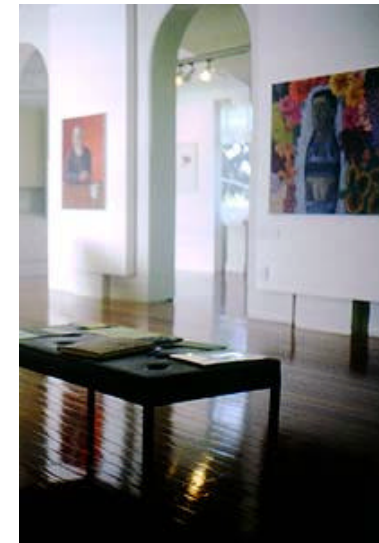
Most of these facilities are small, and there are some arts and cultural groups in the City that feel disadvantaged by the lack of large facilities (seating 500 or more) within the City. The Waitakere Brass Band is unable to perform indoors within Waitakere City, and the City's top cultural groups, when they win a national event, are unable to keep up with the tradition of hosting the next event in their area.

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Two major facilities currently in the planning stages are likely to address this need. The first is the proposed Indoor Stadium in Central Park Drive, which will be developed on Council land by a trust which includes the City's main sporting codes. St Dominic's School is fundraising to develop a 1,500-seat theatre in the City.

Other unmet needs are for affordable facilities with soundproofing, sound equipment and recording equipment.

Lopdell House Gallery





Arts and Culture

CASE STUDY

PACIFIKA LIVING ARTS FESTIVAL

Pacific Island peoples make up 14.6% of Waitakere City's population. In 1996 a milestone was achieved in the city's artistic history - a festival that brought together all the different Pacific groups in the city to exhibit and demonstrate the art forms for which they are famous. It was held in conjunction with a long running Pacific Island sporting festival.

This was so successful that the ethnic groups decided to make it an annual event. The Council, the Pacific Islands Advisory Board, and Creative NZ have supported the event. Numerous private sector sponsors have also been involved over the years.

The festival has evolved to stretch over several days, and includes Safe Waitakere initiatives such as exercise classes before the day begins, demonstration and teaching sessions for local schoolchildren to learn drumming, weaving, tivaevae techniques; art competitions; fashion shows; oral history collection programmes; and one of the highlights, a day of Pacific food and music which attracts a wide audience from the whole of the Auckland region.

Among the highlights of this developing event, has been the 'discovery' and promotion of Pacific Island art communities who had previously been working only within their own ethnic community. An example of this is the Tuvalu community. The tiny island nation of Tuvalu has a distinctive and colourful weaving and arts tradition, and is also known for its' dancing. These traditions are being kept alive by the Waitakere Tuvalu community in their new home and have been a popular feature of the Living Arts festival.

Updates as at 1 September 2002
Updates @ www.waitakere.govt.nz

One of the most valuable effects of having many Pacific Islands groups working together on this festival has been the intense and proud sharing of craft and design skills between the cultural groups. Waitakere City groups support with pride and enthusiasm other Pacific events in the region, and are known for their ability and commitment.

The Pacifika Living Arts Festival has been a springboard for dreams of a Pacific Islands business and cultural centre in Waitakere City, which is now being investigated.



WHAT THE COUNCIL IS DOING:

- Arts projects.
- Funding Lopdell House.
- Community Centres and Halls.
- Youth Council.
- The Council supports a range of events, including:
 - Pacifika Living Arts Festival
 - Kite day
 - Going West Literary Festival
 - Christmas Giftmaking
 - Trash to Fashion

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WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Support local artists, performances and events.
- Learn about the cultures of Aotearoa/NZ from the people around you – there are many cultures in Waitakere City
- Join an arts or cultural group – for help locating groups contact the Community Assistance Administrator at the Council.

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Waitakere City Council
Te Taiao o Waitakere